

REMARKS

Claim 6 has been canceled. Claims 1 and 21 have been amended to clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claims 1-5, 7, 8, and 12-21 are pending.

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, and 12-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Cohen in view of Liang.

With respect to claims 1 and 21, each has been amended to recite that “comparing the updated access level with a required access level associated with a next attack along the attack path includes determining the required access level associated with the next attack along the attack path at least in part by checking a stored controls data to determine whether an existing control applicable to the next attack along the attack path is in place and, if so, updating an initial, uncontrolled required access level associated with the next attack along the path to an updated required access level that reflects the effect of the control, wherein said step of updating is performed prior to the updated required access level being compared to the existing access level.” Support for the amendment is found in Figures 1B and 8 and accompanying text on pages 11 and 29 of the specification.

Cohen describes a static, hypothetical assessment of network vulnerabilities. Cohen makes mention of fixes and patches, col. 17, lines 10-15, but not determining the effect of such controls on a required level of access and not in the context of updating such a required level of access to dynamically analyze an attack path as recited in claims 1 and 21, as amended. Liang describes detecting viruses at the network level and isolating infected nodes or zones, paragraph 0056, but does not appear to describe using a stored control data to update a required access level as recited in claims 1 and 21. As such, claims 1 and 21 are believed to be allowable.

Claims 2-5, 7, 8, and 12-20 depend from claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for the same reasons described above.

Reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested based on the preceding remarks. If at any time the Examiner believes that an interview would be helpful, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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